

THE STARPATH PROJECT

Annual Report 2015



Starpath

A University of Auckland Partnership for Excellence



THE UNIVERSITY OF
AUCKLAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau
NEW ZEALAND

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Starpath Annual Report 2015

The Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success, established in 2005, has worked with 39 schools to develop programmes of high quality data systems for target setting and tracking student progress, providing evidence for detailed academic conversations across the school. Established as a Partnership for Excellence, the project's main purpose has been to identify and address barriers that prevent participation and success in degree-level study, especially for Māori and Pasifika students.

After 11 years the Starpath Project is nearing the end of its current funding and has focussed its work on:

- Evaluating the effectiveness of the Starpath Project as a means to improve student achievement rates and to address barriers that prevent participation and success at degree-level study.
- Assisting schools to develop a school-wide data culture and embed the Starpath strategies within common practice of teachers, students and school leaders.
- Ensuring the long term sustainability of these successful practices.

As this is the last Annual Report for Starpath Phase 2, it is important to acknowledge the participation of students from Auckland and Northland, and their teachers and school leaders in the research and development programme. Through the partnerships with schools, the project is learning a great deal about what enables and inhibits Māori and Pasifika students and others from mid-low socio-economic areas to gain entry and succeed within degree-level study.

The Starpath Project also wishes to acknowledge and thank its major sponsors: the Tertiary Education Commission and the ASB Community Trust (now known as Foundation North). This work of social and economic importance would not have been possible without the generous support of these sponsors.



Reports

From the Chair

As the Starpath Project for Tertiary Participation and Success nears the end of its time as a Partnership for Excellence with the Government, it is essential that we look back on its aims, how far it has succeeded in meeting these aims and what we might have learned from the project.

When the University of Auckland started the Starpath Project, it identified its mission as ‘bringing about a dramatic transformation in educational and economic outcomes for those groups of students currently under-represented in higher education in New Zealand’. Starpath was about ‘new opportunities’, aiming to ‘ensure that New Zealanders from all walks of life can enter and succeed in advanced tertiary qualifications and high skill employment’.

These were fine words. Starpath was based on the view that students who had the capacity and the desire to progress into tertiary study should be set on a pathway leading to that goal. Research by Starpath team members identified strategies that schools could use to help students to maintain direction and reach their destination: counselling on academic choices and requirements, goal setting, tracking progress, involving whānau, students and teachers in three-way discussions on student aspirations and how these might be met. These strategies have now been used in 39 schools

throughout Auckland and Northland. The Starpath team has collected 10 years of data on achievement for thousands of students and has over 400 in-depth interviews and observations to increase our understanding of how to engage in discussions that motivate and produce better outcomes. An ambitious publication and dissemination strategy has been developed to share what we have learnt with other schools, educators, academics and decision-makers.

Overall, students in Starpath schools have demonstrated significant gains in achievement. There are new ways of doing things and great new relationships. The 2014 University Entrance results, however, were a disappointment. With changes to the common entrance standard that had been flagged some three years before, the success rates took a tumble and the greatest fall was in low decile schools. Changes in patterns of the courses students take appear to have played a significant part in the decline. We need to understand this better. The pathway to degree-level study leads to skilled employment, higher incomes and confident citizenship. This pathway must be kept open for those young people who want to travel it.

The Annual Report 2014-15 is the last in this phase of Starpath activity. The work that Starpath started will not end here. One of the most heartening

signs in the last year is that several teachers from Starpath schools have moved into senior positions in schools around the country and have indicated that they will introduce Starpath strategies for enhancing achievement into their new schools. It has been a privilege to be associated with Starpath and the dedicated principals, teachers and staff who have worked with it.

Professor Raewyn Dalziel
Chair, Starpath Board



From the Director

Whaia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe i te maunga teitei

Seek for those treasures that you value and if you bow your head let it be to a lofty mountain

Starpath has worked in partnership with 39 secondary schools within Northland and Auckland over the past 10 years. We have learned an enormous amount about what it takes to raise achievement particularly for Māori, Pacific and other students in low decile schools during this time. Over the next few years we will continue to find ways to share these learnings in our publications, public seminars and other professional development opportunities through the University of Auckland.

This is our final year of TEC and ASB Community Trust (Foundation North) funding. As we transition out of this funding we remain committed to working with schools to improve the academic outcomes for learners. We will continue to offer our Starpath approach in a number of ways including:

- seeking new sources of funding to continue school support and research
- offering short courses on equity in education, student achievement using data, and achievement for priority learners including Māori, Pacific and low income students

- looking for research and training opportunities to disseminate our learning from 10 years of invaluable work.

We have spent this year completing a number of obligations for Starpath in schools, offering leadership and literacy training, DUACTS and undertaking even more rigorous analysis of our data so that we can identify where the best opportunities for shared learning exists and how best to share these with other schools and the broader educational community. Our analysis highlights some of the successes of Starpath with most schools increasing their NCEA and UE results during the course of the project. 2014, however, proved a difficult year for many schools with UE results lower than hoped because of changes to requirements for entry. This is a profound disappointment given our strong commitment to increasing Māori, Pacific and low income students’ entry into degree level study. As our understanding of the causes of this decline improves, we will be involved in designing advice and strategies to better prepare students for gaining this qualification.

The Ministry of Education funded a Year 9 and 10 extension project in 2014 that demonstrated improvements for that year with a shift in reading and maths to higher curriculum levels. This was noticeable for Māori and Pacific students where around 60% achieved at curriculum Level 4 or higher by the end of the year.

Many thanks to those of you who have contributed to Starpath’s success – especially our partner schools. Thanks also to the many staff who contributed. We have shared the vision of academic achievement for all students and especially those traditionally excluded from degree level study. This has been a wonderful journey and one which will continue as we take the lessons from Starpath into a new form during 2016.

Naku noa

Professor Cindy Kiro
Director, Starpath



From the Governance Board

The initial proposal to the Government for the Starpath Project included a commitment to establish a Board of senior leaders from partner organisations and people with a high level of experience and expertise in the delivery of equal education opportunities. This Board was constituted during 2006 and met for the first time in December of that year under the chairmanship of Dr John Langley, then Dean of the Faculty of Education within the University of Auckland.

Since that first meeting, the Board has met four times a year and has approved strategic, operational and business plans for Starpath. It has monitored the performance of the project against these plans, Starpath’s original goals and the key performance indicators agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission. The Board has assisted the project in fundraising, and approved the Annual Report and research reports. At each meeting the Board has received information on staffing, financial management, and interactions with schools, Government and the media. However, the most important reports the Board has received have been the annual reports on student achievement in Starpath schools and on progression to degree level studies. These reports have provided the data on which we have measured the success of Starpath activities in schools.

In this final annual report it seems appropriate to acknowledge the contribution that a number of people have made to Starpath through membership of the Board. They have been essential advisers, supporters, critics and friends of the project. The members have included, at different times, Dr Helen Anderson and Dr Stuart Middleton, members of the staff of Manukau Institute of Technology which was a partner in Starpath in its initial phase; two of the original designers of the project, Distinguished Professor Dame Anne Salmond and Professor Michael Walker; former Principals, Mr Bill Gavin and Mr Gil Laurenson; members of the Ministry of Education, Mr Rob McIntosh, Ms Anne Jackson and Dr Graham Stoop; Faculty of Education staff members, Professor Graeme Aitken, Dr Brian Annan, Dr Airini, and Professor Stuart McNaughton; Centre for Pacific Studies staff, Mr Walter Fraser and Associate Professor Damon Salesa. From August 2008, the Board had been chaired by Professor Raewyn Dalziel.

The Board itself recognises the commitment, expertise and knowledge that the staff of Starpath have brought to the project. It has appreciated the high level of staff engagement with the goals of Starpath, the constant willingness to be accountable, to be accessible and, above all, to focus on outcomes for students.

Towards Sustainability

After more than a decade working with schools, Starpath’s focus has shifted to how the programme can be made sustainable over the long term.

At this stage of the project the Starpath strategies have, to a large degree, been adopted in all 34 Group A and B schools. As a consequence, the emphasis of our 2014/15 work in schools has shifted from the introduction of a Starpath approach to embedding strategies into school practice. The project has continued to provide support for the five original partner schools where requested.

As the focus has shifted from introduction to sustainability, there has been a move from whole group professional development to more of an individual school approach. We have offered on-site visits tailored to meet identified needs of the school, for example developing deeper understanding of asTTle data to indicate next steps in classroom practice; and developing data inquiry skills for effective data team discussions. There have also been requests for academic counselling and whānau conference training for staff new to schools, which we have responded to by providing training and support in schools.

Group B schools evaluation

In the second half of 2014 we evaluated the work in the 18 Group B schools that joined Starpath in 2012. This follows on from the evaluation of the Starpath programme in Group A schools in 2013

(reported in the 2013-14 Annual Report). As with the previous evaluation, school leaders, teachers and students were invited to take part in individual interviews or focus groups. Each school received individual feedback in a written report sent out in December 2014. As with Group A schools, each report provided a summary of the school’s NCEA results over the previous three years; the views of school leaders, teachers and students on the impact and effectiveness of the Starpath programme; the challenges, and work that still remained to be done. Initial analysis of the Group A and B evaluation is reported in the Research Summary p 15.

Original partner school interviews

In addition, in 2015 we conducted a more limited evaluation in the five original partner schools. Individual interviews were conducted with a total of 20 senior and middle leaders, focusing mostly on how the programme is functioning some six to eight years after its introduction and the issues of sustainability.

One important finding from the evaluation with both Group B and original partner schools is that in most cases schools feel positive about the sustainability of the programme. This is despite

the challenges of implementation, including time, workloads, staff PLD, and achieving quality in the delivery of academic counselling. The reasons given included:

- It has become normal practice and both students and parents expect to have data-informed, achievement-focused conversations with a teacher who knows the student and is supportive of his or her aspirations.
- It is effective and the benefits (in terms of improved relationships and student achievement) outweigh the costs (in terms of staff time and effort).
- It is adaptable and able to work in different schools, as well as being able to be refined over time in response to external changes.
- It did not come with financial or personnel resources and therefore it is not dependent on external resources to continue.

It is important to note that not all schools have made the same progress and some senior leaders have made deliberate decisions to limit the extent to which different aspects of the Starpath programme have been implemented in their schools.

There have been major benefits of increased achievement for Māori and Pasifika students (and indeed all students) in these schools. Taking the Pasifika Level 1 results for the Phase 2A schools for example, we can interpret the results in this way: for every 100 Pasifika students in Phase 2A schools, there were 14 more Pasifika students obtaining their NCEA Level 1 certificate after intervention than before.

Aggregating data in this way can mask variability across the schools. The figure below shows the shifts for each of the 39 schools (including the original partner schools) since intervention, along with the national shift in the same period of time that each school has been associated with Starpath.

The number of schools that improved ranged from 27 for UE (73% of schools) to 37 for Level 2 (95% of schools), and the majority of them were making improvements in excess of the national rate of change.

We acknowledge that these improvements cannot be solely attributed to the Starpath Project, but there are strong indications of positive change in the period in which we have worked with teachers in these schools to raise student achievement. There are often multiple initiatives operating in schools, and there could be a very complex interaction among those initiatives to produce these improvements. In addition, there are contextual factors that come into play such as variation in the way in which different schools adopted the Starpath-led initiatives, changes in school leadership and direction, changes in the UE requirements that raised the standard required for entry to university, and national policy imperatives such as Vocational Pathways and the Better Public Service target of 85% of school leavers with NCEA Level 2 by 2017.

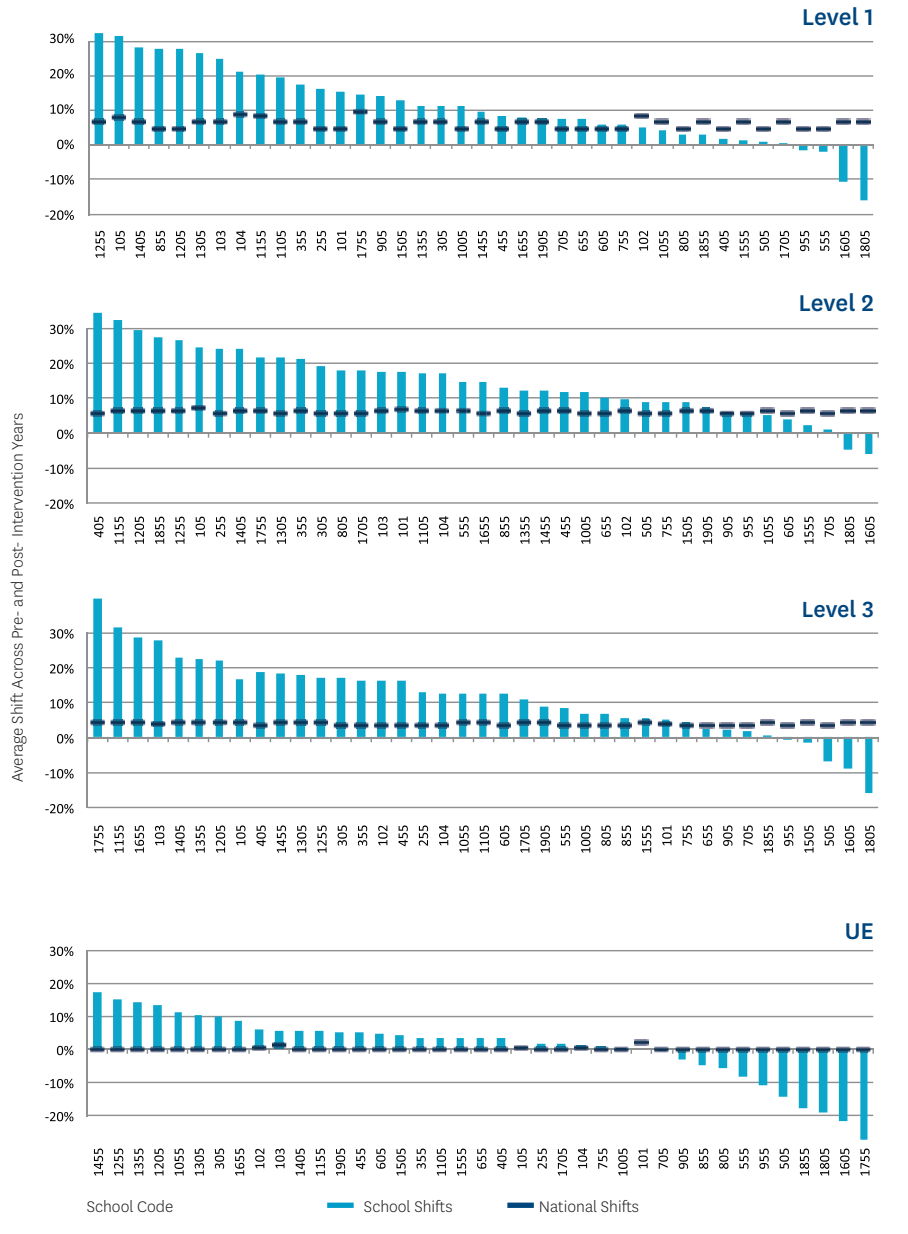
More detailed analyses are currently being conducted, as well as case studies to delve deeper into the data, to tease out what Tony Bryk and his colleagues from the Chicago collaboration on school improvement describe as “what works for whom, under what set of conditions?” (Bryk et al, 2015, pp13-14). Bryk et al go on to say “That we cannot improve at scale what we cannot measure” (2015, p. 14). The answer to these questions and issues will help us understand what makes the biggest difference in terms of supporting student achievement across Starpath schools and what else is needed to support schools that are still struggling.

Reference

Bryk, A.S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A. & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). Learning to Improve. How America’s schools can get better at getting better. Cambridge MSS: Harvard Education Press.

| Phase 2B (18 schools) | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|-------|
| All students | Pre ('06-'11) | Post ('12-'14) | Shift |
| Level 1 | 48.3% | 65.2% | 16.9% |
| Level 2 | 53.8% | 71.8% | 18.0% |
| Level 3 | 39.1% | 56.3% | 17.2% |
| UE | 33.8% | 42.6% | 8.8% |
| | | Mean shift | 15.2% |
| Maori | Pre ('06-'11) | Post ('12-'14) | Shift |
| Level 1 | 38.8% | 51.7% | 12.9% |
| Level 2 | 45.2% | 64.4% | 19.2% |
| Level 3 | 29.4% | 45.4% | 16.0% |
| UE | 23.4% | 28.1% | 4.7% |
| | | Mean shift | 13.2% |
| Pasifika | Pre ('06-'11) | Post ('12-'14) | Shift |
| Level 1 | 38.7% | 59.4% | 20.7% |
| Level 2 | 44.2% | 66.0% | 21.8% |
| Level 3 | 27.4% | 46.6% | 19.2% |
| UE | 20.8% | 29.6% | 8.8% |
| | | Mean shift | 17.6% |

Figure 1: Shifts Pre-Post Intervention by School



One of the measures that we have used was an indication of how much better off students were in Starpath schools in the period after we commenced working with the school compared with the period prior to our intervention.

To do this, we took the aggregated success rate for the pre-intervention period and compared this with the post-intervention success rate, using roll-related statistics. Roll-related statistics use the number of students on the school’s roll on 1 July of each academic year, and not the number of students entered for NCEA, as the denominator when calculating success rates.

In Phase 2, we began our work in 16 schools in 2011 and in a further 18 schools in 2012. The success rates pre and post-intervention, and the shift in success rates, are shown below. Results for the five original partner schools are not shown as they had different start dates for the intervention and cannot be fairly summarised in this way.

Table 1: Success rates pre and post-intervention - Phase 2A and 2B schools

| Phase 2A (16 schools) | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|-------|
| All students | Pre ('06-'10) | Post ('11-'14) | Shift |
| Level 1 | 44.6% | 53.5% | 8.9% |
| Level 2 | 50.4% | 61.8% | 11.5% |
| Level 3 | 37.1% | 44.5% | 7.4% |
| UE | 31.3% | 30.1% | -1.2% |
| | | Mean shift | 6.7% |
| Maori | Pre ('06-'10) | Post ('11-'14) | Shift |
| Level 1 | 33.8% | 41.2% | 7.4% |
| Level 2 | 40.5% | 53.3% | 12.8% |
| Level 3 | 27.4% | 36.0% | 8.6% |
| UE | 24.3% | 24.7% | 0.3% |
| | | Mean shift | 7.3% |
| Pasifika | Pre ('06-'10) | Post ('11-'14) | Shift |
| Level 1 | 29.9% | 44.1% | 14.2% |
| Level 2 | 33.9% | 53.3% | 19.4% |
| Level 3 | 21.0% | 34.5% | 13.4% |
| UE | 15.9% | 20.4% | 4.5% |
| | | Mean shift | 12.9% |

Working with the Ministry of Education

A final analysis of the Starpath Extension Project: Years 9 and 10.

Years 9 and 10 Extension

The extension of the Starpath programme to Years 9 and 10 students ran throughout 2014 to the end of March 2015. Starpath supported the 34 partner schools involved by providing effective professional learning development, assisting with student achievement data through the evidential database, tracking and monitoring visits, and progress checks of each school's action plan.

Key goals of the Year 9 and 10 Extension project were:

1. To raise Year 9 and 10 student achievement as measured by improved asTTle/e-asTTle, and PAT test scores, and evidence of greater numbers of students performing at, or above, the expected curriculum level.
2. To identify priority learner groups, barriers to their achievement, and the most appropriate strategies to ensure they attain maximum benefit from the programme and experience improvement in achievement.
3. To improve the capacity of schools and teachers to use data to track and monitor junior secondary students' progress, and to use evidence to adjust classroom practices to support student learning and achievement with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills.

Specific monitoring and evaluation methods were used to measure the impact of this extension project on student achievement rates, tracking and monitoring, literacy and numeracy, academic counselling and parent/whānau-teacher-student conferencing.

Professional development

Professional development for this contract concentrated on the areas of literacy, numeracy, analysing and using data, core group meetings, academic counselling and three way parent-teacher-student conversations. Feedback from teachers, senior leaders and principals about the quality of the PLD delivered by Starpath was extremely positive.

Literacy

The aim of the literacy component was to support the generic Year 9 and 10 literacy work in schools and to enhance the use and understanding of literacy strategies for teachers of subjects other than English. Professional development consisted of cross-project workshops and individual on-site visits. The workshops for June 2014 to March 2015 were:

- Subject specific literacy workshops to teachers of Years 9 and 10 English, Mathematics, Science, Social Sciences, Technology and PE/Health in August and November. These were held in Auckland and Paihia and proved popular with a total of 163 teachers from 26 partner schools attending.
- A half day literacy workshop which focused on inquiry, literacy demands in units of work and resources was delivered to leaders of Year 9 and 10 literacy in October.

Numeracy

The Starpath Project was fortunate to connect with Team Solutions facilitators who were able to provide the numeracy support needed for this

project. Three workshops based on numeracy were delivered during the time of this project. From August 2014 to March 2015, 141 teachers from 30 partner schools attended. The workshops focused on strengthening knowledge and practice in numeracy and measurement, geometry and algebra at the junior school level. The practical nature of these workshops provided teachers with teaching strategies that could be directly used in the classroom.

Data Inquiry and Data Teams

During the year it became evident that schools were looking for support in how to use Y9 and 10 data to go to the next step in classroom learning. Starpath encouraged the development of a data team approach especially for groups of core class teachers.

- A one day data workshop on analysis, data teams and inquiry was run in November in two locations – Auckland and Paihia, with 28 teachers from 14 schools attending.

Academic Counselling and Three Way Conversations

In term one 2015, four schools requested PLD support with quality and consistency of academic counselling conversations and parent-student-teacher conferences. Starpath provided templates for teachers to use in preparation for these conversations and encouraged them to use less educational jargon during interaction with parents. The importance of goal setting, especially the use of SMART goals, was emphasised as a key part of the academic counselling process. This work has continued beyond the completion of the contract in some other Starpath schools.

Key findings from the Evaluation (Years 9 and 10)

Shifts in Student Achievement

In each of the analyses for Years 9 and 10 across reading and mathematics (comparing start and end of year results) there was an overall shift toward higher curriculum levels for all students (aggregated by ethnicity), and for Māori and Pasifika students when disaggregated by ethnicity. The greatest shifts were for Year 10 students and particularly in mathematics where more students were at or above curriculum Level 4 by the end of the year compared with the beginning of the year. This shift to the right is clearly seen in Figures 2 and 3 for Māori and Pasifika students, where around 60% of students achieved at or above curriculum Level 4 by the end of the year.

Results on student achievement emphasise the importance of students being "secondary ready" by the time they complete Year 8. This means that students need to be at or about Curriculum Level 4 on entry to high school. Across reading comprehension and mathematics we can see that accelerated progress can be made which provides more students with the skills and knowledge they require for a successful journey through the three years of NCEA and on to tertiary study. Results also indicated that there needs to be a continuing focus on Year 10 students, especially in literacy. Making substantial shifts in school practice within a 12 month period is difficult. The short period of this intervention leaves a number of questions unanswered, for example, how sustainable has the intervention been? Further research and development is needed to raise teacher and school leader awareness about important issues included in this report which impact on priority students' achievement in Years 9 and 10.

Other findings

- Increasingly schools are building capacity around junior data. Teachers are developing a deeper understanding of asTTle/e-asTTle information and are seeking ways to use those data to inform teaching and learning.
- Direct observations of Academic Counselling (AC) and Parent-Student-Teacher (PST) sessions suggest more work needs to be done. The model of data/AC/PST practice that schools have adopted has been variable. In some cases this has been to fit into practices already established in the senior school. In other cases individual schools have considered their own circumstances and have modified the model to suit their own conditions. Many schools are encouraging data discussions using Year 9 and 10 data. Schools are seeing the value of core group meetings, use of data walls in staffrooms and the development of data teams.

Issues

- The frustrations of instability with the asTTle/e-asTTle server are proving a barrier to successful use of this test. The Ministry of Education advises they are working on better utilisation and stability for this system over the next year and Starpath staff have been involved in these discussions.
- Schools report that to support student learning in Years 11, 12 and 13 the Student Management System (SMS) must have the capacity to provide a longitudinal view of an individual student's progress starting at Year 9. Starpath has raised this issue with the Ministry of Education which is working on a centralised system that allows customisation for schools. Dr Earl Irving (Senior Quantitative Research Analyst) has been invited to join an SMS advisory group.

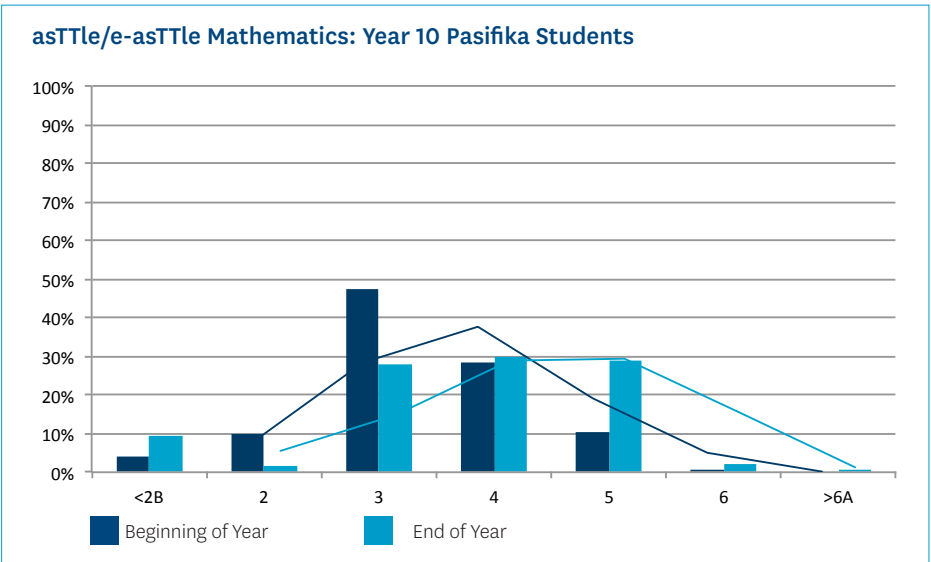


Figure 3. Proportion of Year 10 Pasifika students in each curriculum level in asTTle/e-asTTle mathematics at the beginning and end of 2014.

- A big challenge for all schools is how to sustain the change for Year 9 and 10 once the contract is finished. Starpath is currently working on a toolkit that will leave schools with examples and templates that can be used at junior and senior levels, especially for training staff new to the Starpath strategies. Starpath has also tried to ensure that the leaders of change in the schools are not working in isolation by encouraging collaboration across schools.

Years 9 and 10 are critical for future success

Schools on the extension project showed that accelerated progress can be made in reading and mathematics. This provides more students with the skills and knowledge required to be successful at NCEA and to progress on to study at tertiary level.

A continuing focus on Year 10 students, especially in the area of literacy, is required. At the project's conclusion the demand for subject specific literacy professional development remained strong.

Starpath recommended that schools generate assessment data more regularly, and use the evidence they provide as a basis for improving teaching and learning. Whilst there was a noticeable improvement in this area, it was not widespread. It was encouraging that schools were receptive to changing their practice. Interpreting student achievement data was another area highlighted in which teachers need further professional development. The data must be meaningful, used and shared with all interested parties, in easy-to-understand language.

Collaboration with Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success

During this year the Starpath Project has worked alongside the Ministry of Education's Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success (KEP) project in 21 schools in Auckland and Northland. Kia Eke Panuku is designed to achieve transformative shifts in success for Māori students. The model is built around five dimensions: transformative leadership; evidence-based inquiry; culturally responsive and relational pedagogy; educationally powerful connections with Māori; and literacy, Te Reo and numeracy.

KEP is a national project working in 95 schools. Starpath has confidence that its academic counselling and parent-student-teacher conferences have had a good take-up in KEP schools. However we are not confident that the target-setting, longitudinal data-bases, monitoring and tracking of student progress and literacy work that have been a crucial part of the Starpath programme are an integral part of KEP implementation. To get the full benefit of the contribution that Starpath can make nationally in improving outcomes for students, it is essential that these aspects of the Starpath programme are embedded in school practices.



Towards Sustainability: Partner Schools’ Updates

Manganuiwae-Broadwood Area School

Sustaining innovation in a small rural school

There are many challenges in being a predominantly Māori, small, geographically isolated, area school, responsible for the education of students from Year 1 to Year 13.

Staffing the school is always a struggle. Young, single teachers come but they miss the big city. More experienced teachers come with partners and families but they too feel the pull of larger towns and the employment and social opportunities their families need. It’s a challenge investing a lot of energy and care into new teachers, knowing that in a year or two they will move on. It’s also hard for our teachers having to teach across different levels in the same class, and to teach subjects that are not always in their primary area of expertise. Dedicated, expert teachers are a gift, a taonga we treasure and try to keep for as long as possible.

There is always the temptation to focus on the short term achievements of our students who love their kapa haka, and need to be successful in a cultural context. These are important skills and it is good that students can get credits in these areas as well as in work-based learning through Gateway or STAR programmes. But that is not enough! It’s far too easy to overlook the academic potential of these children.

As a school it became our challenge to refocus on our students’ academic learning and achievement, as well as on their need to become active and more independent learners. We needed to help our children to dream bigger dreams – that they can become naval officers and plumbers, teachers and nurses, accountants and business owners. But to get there they are expected to do well in academic subjects, such as English and te reo Māori, mathematics and science, history and geography.

We also wanted them to have confidence to explore the world, even if mostly via the internet, and to identify the opportunities and pathways to the future.

Starpeth has helped us to take a fresh look at our kids and their potential to learn, and to be real with them and their whānau. It helped us to clarify the difference between “learning” (in academic subjects) and “behaviour” (in terms of sporting and kapa haka skills). In particular, it challenged us to look at the quality of learning and the pathways the learning we were providing were creating for our students. We realised that te reo, maths and computing might result in students achieving NCEA levels 1 and 2, or even level 3, but were not enough to prepare them to go on to tertiary education. As a school we had to be more accountable to our students and our community.

Starpeth provided professional development, but most importantly, it brought that learning to us (to Paihia), which meant that over time all our teachers could attend and develop shared knowledge and skills. Just as importantly, Starpath team members provided on-site visits, mentoring, and feedback as we worked on student data and tracking systems, and implemented academic counselling and three-way parent-student-teacher conferences. Kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) relationships are really important in Māori schools such as this one and they have helped us to share problems and to ask for help. It has been good to learn together.

We now know that when we don’t deliver what we promise the students and the parents will hold us accountable. We have taught the parents to expect to see evidence of their children’s learning in each report they receive; not just nice words,

but measurable evidence of progress, even in our primary school. Recently, a mother of a first year primary school child complained to me: “Aunty, there was no evidence. I was told how good my baby was but there was no evidence. That’s not good enough.” Our young parents have got it and we have to do better!

We learned to look back in order to look forward; to use longitudinal data to see how well students had done in the past, what they needed to do well now, where they wanted to go in the future, and whether we are helping them to learn and to gain credits to help them get there. We still have a lot of work to do, but we can see changes. Our Year 10 and 11 students who have had academic counselling for the past couple of years are expressing higher aspirations and so are their parents. The students are comfortable using new technologies to research a topic they are studying, or to link in to a class lesson when stranded at home by flooded roads. And they are proud to share their academic achievements. It tells a lot about a deeper change that’s taking place when I see one of our girls posting on her Facebook page recently, “Yeah! Got a merit!”, and to see the conversation develop:

“What for?”

“ENGLISH!”

“Way to go!”...

We want our students to be good at sport and to be confident and proud in te reo and tikanga Māori, but we also want them to be successful academically. At the moment the girls are the ones leading the way but the boys are learning and they are coming along.

In conversation with Pani Hauraki, Principal Manganuiwae/Broadwood Area School

Whangarei Girls’ High School

Responding to feedback to develop a sustainable model

In 2009 Whangarei Girls’ joined the *Enhancing Māori and Pacific Student Pathways into University project*. Through the project the school developed a strong teacher/student support programme, known as Academic Coaching. A small team of eight academic coaches were selected and trained. Each coaching session involved a small group of students with one coach. Discussion was based on academic progress and school experiences. A student would be withdrawn from class for these 30 minute sessions two to three times a year.

When the Starpath Project came along in 2011 Whangarei Girls’ saw the new project as an opportunity to continue the coaching work and support it by a deeper understanding of data and tracking progress.

In more recent times the school leadership team started to receive feedback, both anecdotal and through Starpath’s evaluation report, to suggest that the students were looking for a more individualised approach. They wanted more

regular contact with someone who knew them, their aspirations and their progress. They wanted a dedicated time for this conversation that would not interrupt their classroom work. In 2014 the school took deliberate steps to develop its academic counselling model in response to this feedback.

The Principal, Anne Cooper, is adamant that every student has the right to have someone who knows and cares for them as a learner - someone who helps to set the right direction, who will ensure they get help early enough to make certain that when they leave school they have choices.

With this in mind the school has asked whānau teachers to take on the role of advisor. In the new model, accepted by the whole staff, teachers are invited to apply for the role. To demonstrate the value placed on the role, whānau teachers are given a time allowance (two hours per week) and are expected to be accountable to the Principal for that time. The role proved to be popular and there was no difficulty recruiting staff.

As this new arrangement develops there has been plenty of opportunity for discussion and training. Deans and Senior Leaders have held discussions to determine what the role of whānau teacher should look like and, while outside facilitation through Starpath is available, there is confidence that current staff can provide models of good practice. There is also thought going into training senior students in the role of “big sister” for junior class members.

Next year the school plans to include an extended period of time within the timetable to allow the individual conversations to take place without disruption to class time.

A shift in the model is difficult as enthusiastic teachers come to terms with new expectations although strong direction from a development team along with deliberate planning and training, including plenty of opportunity for open discussion, means Whangarei Girls’ is working steadily towards a sustainable strategy that is responsive to student needs.

In conversation with Anne Cooper, Principal Whangarei Girls’ High School

Aorere College

Sustaining change and managing multiple initiatives in a large urban school

Aorere College, a large urban school, joined the Starpath Project in 2011. Starpath strategies are deeply embedded in school practice to the point where the teachers and leadership team no longer use the term “Starpath” when they refer to school processes for academic conversations and tracking achievement.

Over the last few years the school has agreed to participate in a number of professional development initiatives. At the start of 2015 they counted five major initiatives, not including Starpath. All the initiatives were seen as important in the work of raising student achievement but it was also recognised that each initiative could potentially have a different set of requirements and demands on the school.

At the start of 2015 the Ministry of Education facilitated a meeting of the providers of these initiatives. The purpose of the meeting was to ensure that every project was able to see who else was working in the school; that everyone would get to hear what the different demands were; and that the demands made on the school, particularly related to data, could be streamlined.

The school also took this opportunity to outline to the external facilitators its strategic plan and the data that were to be collected to demonstrate how the school was meeting its strategic goals,

the expectation being that each initiative would be working within this professional development and data plan.

The plan divided the school’s development goals into four sections. Each member of the teaching staff is expected to participate in one of these sections. The school provides time for professional learning every Friday. The original idea was that staff would rotate through these programmes in a four year cycle, however each section has developed at a different pace and participants have become the ‘experts’ referred to by others. It is thought that a compulsory rotation may not be necessary in the future. There have been times when one of the initiatives has wanted the involvement of all or a large group of staff although the management of the professional learning has been such that no one group has wanted centre stage at the same time.

Each senior leader is responsible for one section of the PD plan and it has become practice that once a fortnight the senior leadership team meeting focusses on discussing data related to the professional development initiatives. This has allowed the tracking of progress and has encouraged a sense of a coordinated programme. Teachers still feel there is a lot going on in the school but they know as individuals they only need to focus on one part.

Teachers quickly come to understand their role in the school’s overall direction. The strategic goals are represented in a diagram reflecting the four professional development sections. The diagram is highly visible around the school and is frequently referred to by the Principal and senior leaders. The school goals are published at the beginning of the daily notices and are therefore readily available through this ubiquitous document. The Principal also practises a strategy of key messaging to demonstrate how decisions and actions fit into the school’s overall direction.

Aorere College is a busy place and it is easy for teachers to be overwhelmed by the urgent drive of five major initiatives. The planned approach by the senior leaders allows teachers, grounded in the day to day reality of the classroom to see the big picture and gain a sense of their part in the wider plan. For Starpath strategies to be sustained in this environment of multiple initiatives the project must continue to be relevant to the plan and be seen as normal practice in the school.

In conversation with Leanne Webb, Associate Principal Aorere College

Leadership over the long term – maintaining a focus on goals

The University of Auckland Centre for Educational Leadership (UACEL) shares the results of research into Group A and B schools pre and post-intervention.

“Today’s schools don’t need ‘instructional leaders’ who attempt to ensure that teachers use the right moves. Instead, schools need learning leaders who create a school-wide focus on learning both for students and the adults who serve them”

(DuFour and Mattos, 2013, p40).

This quote from duFour and Mattos sums up our approach to leadership development; we do not want to develop leaders who ‘micro-manage teachers’ but we do want to develop leaders who are problem solvers and are both effective learners themselves and leaders who can help the other adults in the organisation to be effective learners also.

The key skills of being a leader are difficult to acquire and to implement; they involve the ability to analyse the current situation, to inquire into causes and to respond to those by setting appropriate goals and making plans for improvement. But that is just the start of the job; the real leadership challenge is maintaining the goal focus during the year and working with other leaders and teachers to check that progress is being made.

What has UACEL’s research from Group A and Group B schools told us about some of these types of behavioural patterns in schools? We analysed school plans and data from questionnaires that had been administered at two different time points: prior to intervention (Time 1) and post-intervention (Time 2).

Planning effectiveness

The obvious positive pattern in the annual plans was that almost all schools had some form of baseline data and, to a greater or lesser degree, were using so-called, SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) targets. The plans usually also stated what was to be done and by whom in order to improve outcomes. Some of the basics of good planning were strongly evident. Particularly in Time 2, plans tended to have strong alignment between a clear vision, as articulated in the strategic section of the schools’ plans, and the annual goals and targets. It was also more frequently noted that plans were easy to read at Time 2, suggesting that some of these plans were becoming potentially more usable documents in their later iterations. Overall, the basic mechanics of annual planning, and specifically goal and target setting behaviours, were well embedded.

Baseline data and problem analysis

Most schools, however, appeared to lack a really sharp focus on a few problem areas, which was evidenced by plans having a lot of targets. For example, while schools tended to put baseline data in plans for targets about qualifications, there was often no such data for other problems such as poor attendance or frequent lateness – and yet other evidence (see the problem solving section) indicates that, for many schools, these problems are serious and need addressing. Further, while some form of baseline data was in most plans, these data were not always easy to find, to read, or to make sense of, because of the way they were set out, perhaps betraying a lack of deeper analysis and clear problem identification.

This widespread characteristic led us to make the following recommendation:

That schools collect data of interest and display it clearly (possibly in their strategic section of their plans) in a grid so that all data can be reviewed systematically for patterns over time.

We hasten to add, though, that because one collects all these data, does not imply that one should target every area.

Goal and target setting behaviour

On average, schools had three broad academic goals (goals pertaining to presence, engagement or achievement), which does not sound too onerous, but they mostly had a great many more targets. For example, in Group B, Time 2, schools had, on average, nine academic targets. The general pattern from plans was that schools ‘targeted’ Year 9 and 10 literacy and numeracy results, NCEA 1, 2 and 3 results, and University Entrance. Many schools had numerous other academic targets as well. While most schools also ‘targeted’ Māori or Pasifika student achievement, it tended to be across all of the categories for which all students were targeted, thereby doubling the number of targets. Schools had up to 30 targets recorded in various parts of their plans. This is not targeting - targets imply prioritising one or two areas of need. The overall effect of the sheer number of goals/ targets/objectives, not to mention initiatives that were often named as goals, was that goals were not memorable; school leaders often struggled to recall what their goals or targets were.

Goal knowledge

If senior and middle leaders do not even know what their goals are, they can hardly expect staff to know and to help to achieve them. Obviously the more goals a school has, the less likely they are to be recalled and worked on by staff. Over the two time points, leaders from senior management teams were able to recall their school goals with about 55% accuracy, while middle management teams, on average, recalled goals with about 40% accuracy. These results did not change significantly over all leaders across the intervention period. Individual leader scores varied widely, from nil to 100%. Some teams of leaders also scored averages across that full range; in other words there were some leadership teams where all members could recall all their goals and other teams where no members could recall, with sufficient accuracy, any school goals at all. Not surprisingly, the high scoring teams were invariably from schools with a few, clear, memorable goals. In some cases these had been distilled from the full plans and published separately as diagrams that could be put up around the school.

Problem solving behaviour

As part of the annual improvement plan, leaders need to address issues that are perceived to be obstructing improvement. We checked how serious middle leaders perceived 13 key barriers to be, asked senior leaders to predict those ratings, and invited both teams of leaders to rate themselves and one another as to their effectiveness in contributing to problem solving against each barrier. We noted an interesting pattern between seriousness of the problems (as rated by middle leaders) and the effectiveness with which each problem was seen as being dealt with by senior leaders. In general, with the possible exception of student literacy levels, the more serious the problem, the less likely it was to be seen as being dealt with effectively by senior leaders. These perceptions are no doubt interdependent to some extent (i.e., are they dealt with less effectively because they are serious, or are they viewed as serious because they are not being actively dealt with?). We presented leaders with 13 possible barriers to rate. Results from whole group data include the following:

- High student absenteeism was perceived as the most serious barrier to raising student achievement and was simultaneously rated as barely satisfactorily dealt with. We noted few targets about student attendance despite this seriousness. It appears as if poor attendance is frequently being tolerated, or at least, not being specifically addressed.
- The next most serious barrier, as rated by middle leaders, was low levels of literacy. This was viewed as being dealt with satisfactorily, perhaps reflecting Starpath’s focus on literacy across the curriculum in recent years.
- The third most serious problem was variable teaching performance and this was perceived to be minimally effectively dealt with. Yet, when leaders do not address this it can become highly corrosive of trust amongst the adults, and students suffer.
- Students’ lateness to class stands out from the normal trend. Although seen as only moderately serious, it was seen by middle leaders as being

the barrier that was least effectively dealt with by senior leaders. Whose job is it to ensure students arrive on time to lessons? Is the role well understood and agreed between middle and senior leaders? Again, what discussion is there about the responsibilities for this?

- Teacher access to student data and cultural responsiveness to students were rated by middle leaders as relatively less serious and well dealt with. These two findings may also be a result of interventions such as Starpath and Te Kotahitanga.

To improve school performance, leaders need to create a coherent environment; coherence is promoted by prioritising and monitoring progress on a few problems. This analysis led to our second major recommendation:

That schools analyse their data carefully and only target a few, salient problem areas – and monitor progress on those areas every term.

Linda Bendikson and Mark Broadwith, UACEL



Literacy Strand

Literacy workshops supported by the Woolf Fisher Research Centre (WFRC) continue to be delivered in Starpath partner schools with positive results.



The Starpath literacy programme was extended to Group B schools in 2014. The programme improves student achievement by developing reading and writing capabilities across all subject areas, including English, mathematics and science. It is delivered via professional learning and development (PLD) for school leaders and subject leaders, and is led by Dr Aaron Wilson from the Woolf Fisher Research Centre, supported by Tania Linley-Richardson, Starpath PLD facilitator.

The literacy programme is a blended model addressing both generic and subject-specific features of literacy. The generic strand of the programme consisted of four workshops in which school and subject leaders worked together to discuss student achievement and literacy teaching data and to learn about, plan and reflect on shared approaches. This strand was important because many principles of effective literacy and language teaching are applicable to all subject areas. It is also recognised that teaching will be more effective when teachers align to address common learning goals. This can be difficult to achieve in secondary schools because students have different teachers for each subject and traditionally there are few opportunities for teachers from different departments to collaborate. One shared focus at these workshops was on increasing students' opportunities to read rich and challenging texts in all subject areas. Another was on different teachers in a school using similar literacy teaching approaches to address identified student needs and to use consistent terminology, for example, when teaching students about paragraph writing.

The programme also had a subject-specialised

strand in which teachers and leaders of English, mathematics and science learnt about literacy demands and effective teaching approaches in the context of their own subject. This strand built on previous research in schools on the West Coast of the South Island conducted by Dr Wilson and Woolf Fisher Research Centre colleagues, which showed that teachers can find it easier to use new literacy teaching approaches when literacy professional development is tailored to their specific subject. One reason for this is that teachers may more easily see the usefulness and applicability of teaching approaches when they are contextualised in their own subject area. Another reason is that the literacy knowledge students need becomes more complex and more subject-specialised as they move into and through secondary school. For instance, secondary students will seldom, if ever, be required to read literary texts such as novels, plays, and poems in any subject other than English, and mathematics word problems are almost exclusive to mathematics, historical documents to history, and scientific research reports to science. Similarly, each subject also has its own highly specialised technical vocabulary and students are unlikely to encounter the words onomatopoeia, assonance or sibilance outside of English, osmosis outside of science or square root outside of mathematics.

Another feature of the Starpath literacy programme was the partnership with Dr Linda Bendikson and Mark Broadwith from the University of Auckland's Centre for Educational Leadership. Dr Bendikson and Mr Broadwith supported and challenged school leaders to set goals, including literacy goals, and implement plans. The partnership was vital because the literacy programme was pitched at senior and middle leaders who were expected to disseminate ideas and activities from the workshops to other teachers in their schools and departments.

Analyses of effectiveness

Preliminary analyses of classroom observations provide evidence of some positive shifts in literacy teaching in all three subject areas: English, science and mathematics. The observers recorded details about the lessons including properties of texts used, teaching activities, how students were grouped, forms of differentiation, and the focus and characteristics of any literacy instruction. Every alternate three minute block was observed providing a 50% sampling of each lesson.

The percent of blocks in which students were presented with some form of written text to read increased on average from 66% in 2013 to 84% in 2014. There was also an increase in the length of the texts provided. In 2013 texts of 600 words or longer were only observed in 4% of all blocks but in 2014 were observed in 17% of blocks. This was particularly evident in biology with an increase from 4% to 19%, and in English with an increase from 10% to 36%. Books as the original source of texts were observed in 9% of blocks in 2013 but 15% of blocks in 2014. These are positive shifts because one of the concerns we had raised with schools in the PLD was the limited opportunities observed in 2013 for reading challenging disciplinary texts in subject areas.

Another important shift was in the area of strategy instruction which increased across subjects from 11% in 2013 to 19% in 2014. Strategy instruction increased from 8% to 17% in mathematics, 19% to 24% in biology and 8% to 17% in English. These are potentially important shifts because there is a large body of research supporting the effectiveness of explicit literacy instruction to raise students' metacognition and because rates prior to the literacy programme had been low.

Detailed analyses of classroom observations, NCEA data, and measures of middle leaders' knowledge of literacy in their subject area are currently being undertaken to find out more about the nature of shifts associated with the literacy programme, and what can be done to make programmes like this more effective.

Research Summary

The last 12 months have been extremely busy for the three Starpath-led initiatives.

The three initiatives include the Data Utilisation, Academic Counselling and Target Setting (DUACTS) programme, the Literacy programme delivered by the Woolf Fisher Research Centre and the Leadership programme delivered by the University of Auckland Centre for Educational Leadership (UACEL). A key task for this year has been to evaluate the overall impact and effectiveness of these three initiatives across the 34 participating secondary schools. Cross-team analysis has begun as the evaluation will be mixed-methods, involving both quantitative and qualitative methods comprising multiple data sources that will inform one another and allow for triangulation of major findings. The final summative report will be published on the Starpath website in March 2016 and made available to all participating schools and interested parties.

Programme Evaluation for DUACTS Group A and B Schools

Evaluation of the 34 Group A and B Schools is building a picture of how effective the DUACTS programme has been in supporting changes in practice to enhance student achievement.

Across Phase 2 the DUACTS team has focussed on enabling schools to continually improve data utilisation, to drive effective target setting, tracking and monitoring, and to hold powerful academic conversations, including those with families, while at the same time communicating high expectations of all students. From the evaluation we are learning about ongoing challenges to implementation, leading to mixed results of student achievement and a lack of impact in some areas. We are continuing to analyse our data and to identify enablers and barriers to Māori and Pacific students and others from schools serving low socio-economic areas, achieving equitable academic outcomes. Below we highlight some of the preliminary themes related to impact and effectiveness of implementation. These themes emerge from analysis of 922 Phase 2 interviews with students, teachers and school leaders.

Student views

511 students participated in 83 student focus group interviews across the 34 Phase 2 secondary schools. NVivo analysis revealed 74% of comments made in these interviews contained positive comments on academic counselling. Māori and Pacific students in particular spoke positively about the academic counselling programme for students in the senior years, but they also saw the benefits for its implementation at Years 9 and 10. Senior students argued that an earlier intervention would result in better informed and prepared students for the academic journey that would ultimately lead to advanced education and/or employment. A number of positive interrelated themes emerged from student interviews and included:

- Improved communication (and its timeliness) about matters pertaining to student achievement between students and teachers;
- Improved relationships between students and teachers with teachers being more responsive to students' needs;
- Student/teacher/parent meetings facilitated improved communication and awareness of student achievement/goals.
- Students saw positive impacts from improved academic counselling practices upon their aspirations and on their current motivation and performance.

Whilst there were many positive comments, students were also concerned about low teacher and community expectations of Māori and Pacific student success and about negative stereotypes of students as 'low achievers'. Students also shared concerns about poor quality academic counselling and ineffective teaching practices within their school.



Teacher and School Leader views

School leaders participated in individual interviews and 301 teachers participated in 56 focus groups across A and B schools. Analysis of teacher and school leader transcripts revealed that 85% of interviews contained positive comments related to Starpath overall, with 56% of comments related to positive impacts on student achievement and outcomes within schools. Participants perceived that the implementation of Starpath had made “a measurable difference” and there was a sense of excitement and pride as participants described visible changes compared with previous years. Teachers and school leaders were particularly excited about improvements in Māori and Pasifika student achievement results and in changes to teacher and/or school practice which participants perceived as enabling change. Some of these were:

- 1. An increased focus on students, their goals and aspirations and their achievement across the school community;
- 2. Greater alignment of activities to support this focus across the school community;
- 3. Changing attitudes about using student achievement data (making it more visible and accessible), and;
- 4. Improved communication about student achievement through timely feedback, increased tracking and monitoring and parent-teacher-student conferencing.

An analysis of interview data indicated that 73% of teacher focus groups and school leader interviews contained positive comments related to the impact of Starpath on whānau/parent/caregiver engagement in school. Improving relationships and communication between teachers/school leaders and whānau/parents/caregivers across the school community was considered essential to support increases in student achievement and learning outcomes.

Whilst many teachers and school leaders reported positive changes, there were others who talked about mixed results and negative impacts in terms of student achievement, on whānau/parents/caregivers and on the school overall. An analysis of transcripts revealed that 27% of teacher focus groups and school leader interviews contained mixed comments related to the impact of Starpath work on student achievement whilst 14% of these contained negative comments. In addition 28% of interview material contained mixed comments as to the impact on whānau/parents/caregivers compared with 16% that related to negative comments. 38% of teacher focus groups and school leader interviews contained mixed comments about the impact of Starpath on schools overall whilst 8% of this material indicated negative comment. Content analysis of this ‘mixed’ and ‘negative’ commentary highlighted some interrelated themes:

- A lack of quality data and communication about student progress within schools;
- Mixed results for different groups of students;
- Concerns about the variability of DUACTION implementation, including a lack of ownership of the programme; a lack of impact on teacher/school practices, variability in teacher/School Leader expertise and practices related to tracking and monitoring of student achievement; and
- Concerns about whether any impact could be attributable to Starpath.

While taking these negative aspects into account the overall analysis suggests that having seen the early benefits and the potential for further improvement in student outcomes, the leaders and teachers are supportive of the programme continuing. In many schools the practices have become the norm and are becoming embedded as part of “how we do things”. Most evaluation participants were adamant that they would not want to go back to previous systems and practices. As one teacher expressed it, “it’s done too much good to go back”.

Summer Scholar

Success in science subjects at university

What is the relationship between success in science subjects at school and at university?

At a meeting in February with the University of Auckland’s Faculty of Science Associate Dean (Academic), Starpath’s summer scholar Steven Turnbull and his supervisor Dr Earl Irving presented the findings from their study that investigated this question over the 2014/15 summer break.

Steven had access to data on over 2,700 students taking the 12 most frequently taken science and mathematics papers in their first year in the Faculty of Science at the University of Auckland. He also had access to their academic record from their last year at high school, and compared the likelihood of success in their first year courses for students who had or had not taken specific achievement standards in Year 13.

Unsurprisingly, the chances of success in first year science papers were greater for students who had studied the equivalent subject in their last year at secondary school, and the better their NCEA result, the better their university grade. For example,

students who took chemistry standards at Level 3 at high school were almost six times more likely to be successful on Chemistry 110 at university than those who did not.

The university tags some achievement standards as essential/important or preferred/helpful if a student is considering taking that subject at university. In the case of Chemistry 110, a student who obtains AS91392 Demonstrate understanding of equilibrium principles in aqueous systems (an ‘important’ standard) is almost four times as likely to be successful as a student who has not. There were similar findings for papers in biology, physics, mathematics and statistics, although the magnitude of the relationship varied.

Steven found that the proportion of externally/internally assessed standards was significantly related to the grade point average (GPA) of the students at university. Students who obtained an A grade at university had just over half of their standards internally assessed, and the proportion of internally assessed standards steadily increased as the grade decreased until students with a D

grade obtained almost 60% of their NCEA from internally assessed standards. Māori and Pasifika students had the highest proportion of internally assessed standards in Year 13, and this pattern was also true of schools like those in the Starpath Project.

There are clear implications for high school students and teachers, as well as for the university. Students need to take subjects at high school if they wish to pursue them at university, and that the essential or preferred standards really do make a difference. In addition, students who are university-bound should maximise the number of externally assessed standards they take in Year 13, and, with the encouragement of their teachers, make sure that they turn up to the examination. Teachers should carefully re-examine the standards that are being offered in Year 13, with an emphasis on the inclusion of externally assessed standards. Finally, for the University, clear communication of the importance of including the essential/important or preferred/helpful standards in Year 13 offerings will ensure that the opportunity to learn and to succeed is increased for all students, especially those who are university-bound.

Project Outputs

(1 July 2014 - 30 June 2015)

Published articles

- Wilson, A., & McNaughton, S. (2014). Using selected NCEA standards to profile senior students’ subject-area literacy. SET: Research Information for Teachers, 2, 61-68.
- Gan, M.J.S., Irving, S.E., & McKinley, E. (2014). Early warning systems in schools: Tracking and monitoring students’ progress using NCEA achievement data. SET: Research Information for Teachers, 2, 54-60.
- Santamaria, A.P., Webber, M., McKinley, E., Madjar, I., (2014). The Starpath Project: Promoting Student Success in Secondary Schools Serving Low SES Communities. In Carpenter, V., Osborne, S. (eds) Education and Poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand. Dunmore Publishing.

Conference presentations

- Webber, M. & McKinley, E. The Starpath Project: Navigating learning for Māori, Pasifika and other students from low SES backgrounds. Presented at AARE-NZARE 2014 Conference, held at Queensland University of Technology (Kelvin Grove Campus). 30 November – 4 December 2014.
- Gan, M., Irving, S. E., & McKinley, E. A. Early Warning Systems: Tracking and monitoring student progress using National Certificate of Educational Achievement data. Paper presented at the Combined Meeting of the Australian Association for Research in Education and the New Zealand Association for Research in Education: Brisbane, QLD. December 2014.
- Kiro, C. Culture Empathy and Future. Presentation at the International Roots of Empathy Research Symposium, Ontario, Canada. 26 March 2015.
- Webber, M., McKinley, E., & Rubie-Davies, C. Making It Personal: Connecting With Māori Students and Their Families. Refereed presentation at the American Educational Research Association Conference, Chicago, US. 16 – 20 April 2015.

Other presentations

- Wilson, A. Improving subject achievement through more effective subject literacy instruction. Presentation to all students enrolled in the Post Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) programme for 2014. 21 and 22 October 2014.
- Wilson, A. Improving subject achievement through more effective subject literacy instruction. Presentation to the 2015 cohort of the Teach First NZ programme. 3 and 17 December 2014.
- Robinson, Bendikson, McNaughton, Wilson & Zhu. Joining the Dots: The challenge of creating coherent school improvement. Presentation to all teachers at Southern Cross Campus. 28 January 2015.
- Turnbull, S. & Irving, S.E., Presented findings from Summer Scholar research on What is the relationship between success in science subjects at school and at university? to Associate Dean (Academic) Faculty of Science, University of Auckland, 18 February 2015.
- Eaton, J. & Linley-Richardson, T. Presentation about Starpath to the UN Youth Declaration Conference: Education Group. Auckland. 8 April 2015.
- Hynds, A. & Rangī, M. Starpath research display at the Celebrating Research Excellence event, City Campus, University of Auckland. The annual event highlights research achievements at the University. 5 May 2015.
- Eaton, J. Update on the Starpath project to Uniservices meeting at Sorrento. 25 May 2015.

Starpath seminars, workshops and lectures

- Aaron Wilson lectures on Starpath as an intervention to achieve equity outcomes on the course EDPROFST 701 Issues in Literacy Education. Semester Two 2014.
- Aaron Wilson references Starpath, especially literacy data, in other courses taught: EDCURSEC 656 and 657 (English teaching), with Teach First NZ students, and with Woolf Fisher Lead Teacher Scholarship students under his supervision. Semester Two 2014.

Joint Research Seminar Series

Te Puna Wānanga and the Starpath Project

Dr Peter Keegan (Senior Lecturer, Te Puna Wānanga) and Associate Professor Anne Hynds (Director: Starpath Research) presented a joint research seminar series held at the Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland. The seminar series is entitled, ‘Equity, education and achievement: What research tells us about the contradictions and complexities?’ Held on the third Wednesday of each month the series has been attended by PhD students, outside visitors, international guests, and colleagues from the University. Seminars held to June 2015 are listed below.

April 22nd: Professor Alison Jones (Te Puna Wānanga)
A whakapapa of New Zealand’s first school book.

May 20th: Dr Peter Keegan (Te Puna Wānanga)
Developing tools to improve the pronunciation of Māori language.

June 17th: Professor C. Kiro, Dr I., Madjar, Dr S .E. Irving & Associate Professor A. Hynds (Starpath). *Where are we now? Update on the Starpath Project.*

Ministerial meetings and visits

- Professor Liz McKinley and Dr Aaron Wilson present on Starpath at some 20 hui attended as part of Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success (BoS), to an audience of leaders of BoS schools, iwi and Ministry of Education representatives. 2014.
- Professor Liz McKinley attended a meeting of the Benchmarks for Progress sub-group of the Ministerial Cross Sector Reference Group for Raising Student Achievement. 29 July 2014.
- Professor Raewyn Dalziel, Professor Liz McKinley and Joy Eaton met with Chris Harwood, Elizabeth Eley and Brett Young from the Ministry of Education on Year 9 and 10 Milestone Report 3. 29 July 2014.
- Professor Liz McKinley attended a meeting of the Ministerial Cross Sector Forum on Raising Student Achievement. 5 August 2014.
- Professor Cindy Kiro attended the Ministerial Cross Sector Forum (MCSF) in Wellington with Graham Stoop and Lisa Rodgers. 13 March 2015.

- Dr Earl Irving attended a meeting with MoE Wellington to discuss Student Management Systems (SMS) and their functionality for schools. 27 March 2015.
- Graham Stoop and Lisa Rodgers from MoE visited Starpath. Starpath attendees were Distinguished Professor Dame Anne Salmond, Professor Kiro, Associate Professor Hynds, Dr Madjar, Dr Irving, Joy Eaton, Tania Linley-Richardson, Morgan Rangi, Victoria Cockle, Stephen McTaggart. (Professor Aitken by Skype). 12 May 2015.
- Associate Professor Anne Hynds attended the Ministerial Cross Sector Forum in Wellington. 21 May 2015.

Other meetings and events with key stakeholders

- Associate Professor Hynds and Joy Eaton met with Iona Holsted (Chief Review Officer) and Dale Bailey (Deputy Chief Review Officer, Northern Region) from Education Review Office: update on Starpath progress. 30 January 2015.
- Dr Earl Irving attended meeting of the Technical Oversight Group: Assessment (TOGA). NZQA, Wellington. 26 - 27 February 2015

- Professor Cindy Kiro met with Minister of Education for Ontario Liz Sanders; Assistant Deputy Ministers of Education and Aboriginal Affairs; Premier of Ontario Kathleen Wynne; Chief Ian Campbell from British Columbia and local elder Kat Kruger from the Longhouse nation; and visited a large multi-cultural urban school in downtown Toronto. March 2015.
- Dr Anne Hynds and Dr Earl Irving introduced Visiting Professor Tony Bryk (from the US based Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) to Starpath and took him to visit Mangere College. 17 March 2015.
- Professor Kiro, Joy Eaton, Dr Irena Madjar and Dr Earl Irving met with the Chancellor and Senior Staff from the University of Saskatchewan when they visited the Faculty of Education. Te Puna Wānanga hosted the party for the morning at the request of the PVC Māori who also attended. April 2015.
- Joy Eaton attended Learning Auckland Leadership Table (organised by COMET Auckland), a meeting to discuss the learning plan for Auckland City. 20 April 2015.
- Professor Cindy Kiro hosted a meeting for the Starpath team to update MPs Louisa Wall and David Cunliffe on the project. 21 April 2015.
- Professor Kiro is a panellist for the Prime Minister’s Awards for Education Excellence.

The panel meet for the first time on 6 May with meetings and site visits to candidates between May and June 2015.

- Associate Professor Anne Hynds and Joy Eaton met with Trudie McNaughton and Equity Office staff. 28 May 2015
- Professor Dalziel, Professor Kiro, Associate Professor Hynds and Joy Eaton met with Foundation North (ASB Trust) CEO, Jenny Gill. 10 June 2015.
- Professor Liz McKinley attended the TLRI Board meeting chaired by Lisa Rodgers. 16 June 2015.
- Starpath hosted Dr Arnetha Ball from Stanford University. Associate Professor Anne Hynds and Joy Eaton took her to Onehunga High School. 17 June 2015.
- Starpath hosted 3 researchers from Charles Darwin University. They are working with remote aboriginal communities in Australia. 26 June 2015.

Starpath Events

- Starpath Principals’ Day. The event is held for all Principals from Starpath’s partner schools. The main theme was Towards Sustainability. Dr Graham Stoop and Lesley Hoskin from the Ministry of Education were also in attendance. Novotel Ellerslie. 3 July 2014.

Project media coverage

(1 July 2014 - 30 June 2015)

- 14 Sept 2014: Proximity to poverty drives mums and dads out of school zones. Interview Joy Eaton. Sunday Star Times.
- February 2015: NCEA and the alternatives. Dr Earl Irving comments on the lack of data enabling any robust comparison between NCEA, IB and CIE. NZ Education Review.
- 6 March 2015: Cindy Kiro is interviewed on Morning Report. She says it is unacceptable that Maori and Pasifika have had the biggest drop in the University Entrance pass rate. Radio NZ.
- 9 April 2015: NCEA: Shining examples emerge from list. Mangere College principal John Heyes credits Starpath in its improving NCEA pass rates. New Zealand Herald.
- 22 April 2015: Paeroa College to begin its Starpath journey. Paeroa College to begin a programme based on Starpath. Waikato Times.
- 3 June 2015: NZOM honours homegrown educator.

- Professor Elizabeth McKinley is made an officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit. Wairarapa Times Age.
- 23 June 2015: Cindy Kiro, Earl Irving and Joy Eaton on the success of Starpath which aims to increase tertiary participation for Māori and Pacific students. Central Leader, East & Bays Courier.
- 23 June 2015: Professor Cindy Kiro on the rise in Māori student achievement in some areas, but how there’s still a lot of work that needs to be done to boost it further. Radio NZ (Te Manu Korihi, Morning Report).
- 29 June 2015: Data key to fixing educational inequality. Interview with Tamaki College. Stuff. co.nz.
- 30 June 2015: Researching students key to closing gap. Interview with Onehunga High School. Stuff. co.nz.





Starpath

A University of Auckland Partnership for Excellence

Contact

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